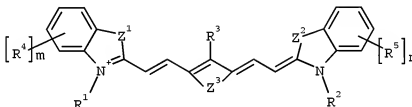


## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A heat-sensitive lithographic printing plate precursor comprising (i) a support having a hydrophilic surface or which is provided with a hydrophilic layer and (ii) a coating provided thereon, the coating comprising (a) an oleophilic layer which comprises a polymer that is soluble in an aqueous alkaline developer and (b) an infrared light absorbing compound according to the following formula:



wherein

- m and n each independently represent an integer from 0 to 4;
- $Z^1$  and  $Z^2$  each independently represent one or two non-metallic atoms, which may be substituted, necessary to complete a 5- or 6-membered heterocyclic ring;
- $Z^3$  represents two or three non-metallic atoms, which may be substituted, necessary to complete a 5- or 6-membered heterocyclic or carbocyclic ring;
- each  $R^1$ ,  $R^2$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  independently represent an optionally substituted alkyl, alkenyl, aryl or aralkyl group, or a group selected from  $-G^1$ ,  $-L^1-G^1$ ,  $-CN$ , a halogen,  $-NO_2$ ,  $-OR_a$ ,  $-CO-R_a$ ,  $-CO-O-R_a$ ,  $-O-CO-R_d$ ,  $-CO-NR_dR_c$ ,  $-NR_dR_c$ ,  $-NR_d-CO-R_c$ ,  $-NR_d-CO-O-R_a$ ,  $-NR_d-CO-NR_cR_f$ ,  $-SR_d$ ,  $-SO-R_a$ ,  $-SO_2-R_a$ ,  $-SO_2-O-R_a$  and  $-SO_2-NR_aR_b$ ; or wherein two adjacent  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  groups together form an optionally substituted 5- or 6-membered ring which is fused to the ring formed by  $Z^1$  or  $Z^2$ ;
- $R^3$  represents a hydrogen or a halogen atom,  $-L_2-G^2$ , an alkyl group, an alkenyl group, an aralkyl group, an aryl group, a thioalkyl group or a thioaryl group, each of said groups being optionally substituted;

with

- $L_1$  and  $L_2$  being a divalent linking group;
- $R_a$ ,  $R_b$  and  $R_c$  being an optionally substituted alkyl, alkenyl, aryl or aralkyl group;

- $R_d$ ,  $R_e$ , and  $R_f$  being hydrogen or an optionally substituted alkyl, alkenyl, aryl or aralkyl group;  
 wherein the solubilizing groups  $G^1$  and  $G^2$  are solubilizing groups and are anionic or become anionic in an aqueous alkaline solution having a pH of at least 9, and [[.]]  
 wherein the infrared light absorbing compound comprises three, four or five of the solubilizing groups  $G^1$  or  $G^2$ .
- 2. (Original) A printing plate precursor according to claim 1 wherein  $R^3$  comprises at least one of said solubilizing groups.
- 3. (Original) A printing plate precursor according to claim 1 wherein  $R^1$ ,  $R^2$ ,  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  each comprise one of said solubilizing groups.
- 4. (Original) A printing plate precursor according to claim 1 wherein the IR light absorbing compound comprises three solubilizing groups, of which one is comprised in each of  $R^1$ ,  $R^2$  and  $R^3$ .
- 5. (Original) A printing plate precursor according to claim 1 wherein the IR light absorbing compound comprises three solubilizing groups, of which one is comprised in each of  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$ .
- 6. (Original) A printing plate precursor according to claim 1 wherein the IR light absorbing compound comprises four solubilizing groups, of which one is comprised in each of  $R^1$ ,  $R^2$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$ .
- 7. (Original) A printing plate precursor according to claim 1 wherein  $Z^1$  and  $Z^2$  are — $C(CH_3)_2$ —.
- 8. (Original) A printing plate precursor according to claim 1 wherein  $Z^3$  is  $-(CH_2)_2-$  or  $-(CH_2)_3-$ .
- 9. (Original) A printing plate precursor according to claim 1 wherein  $R^3$  is  $-Cl$  or optionally substituted  $-S-C_6H_5$ .

10. (Previously Presented) A printing plate precursor according to claim 1 wherein the solubilizing group is a carboxy group, a sulfo group, a hydroxy group, or salts thereof.

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.